

EXCISE

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February 15, 1984

Mr. Malcolm Baldrige
Secretary
Department of Commerce
14th & Constitution Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20203

Dear Secretary Baldrige:

Reference is made to our conversation at the recent NAEGA luncheon in Washington.

As I mentioned to you then, recently travel restrictions were issued for Soviet personnel prohibiting travel to the Port of Houston. As we pointed out to you, Houston is one of the most important ports for the export of hard winter wheat of this country and since this is the preferred quality by the USSR, almost half of all the grain is shipped to them through this port. While we understand that there must be restrictions to such ports as Norfolk and Pascagoula for security reasons and the other side has the same restrictions in Vladivostock and Talinn, there do not seem to be any particular reasons to put the port of Houston off limits, especially since our side is free to travel to all of the major USSR grain importing ports and facilities. Would you therefore kindly look into it and let me know what can be done if anything.

Thank you again for spending some time with us. I believe that in general we had very constructive talks. Part of the opposition of agriculture to a new department of trade & industry stems from the fact that there seems to be a conflict of interest between the requirements of trade and industry which might run in opposite directions but more so a fear that agriculture would loose the prominent place it now has being represented by USDA and STR. I believe it would go a long way to put these fears to rest if the department would more clearly spell out what the function of the new agency would be.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY J.D. STODDART DATE 11/12/85

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1S AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____

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